

**BUSINESSES
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TRAINING MANUAL

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Training manual for all Businesses Against Abuse participants.



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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

What Is VAWG?

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) means any act of harm, abuse, or control directed at women and girls, usually because they are female. It's based on unequal power between men and women and can happen in any setting — at home, at work, in public, or online.

This could include forms of abuse such as:

PHYSICAL – hitting, slapping, choking or hurting someone's body.

SEXUAL – any sexual activity without consent.

EMOTIONAL – threats, name-calling, controlling behaviour.

ECONOMIC – taking control of someone's money or resources.

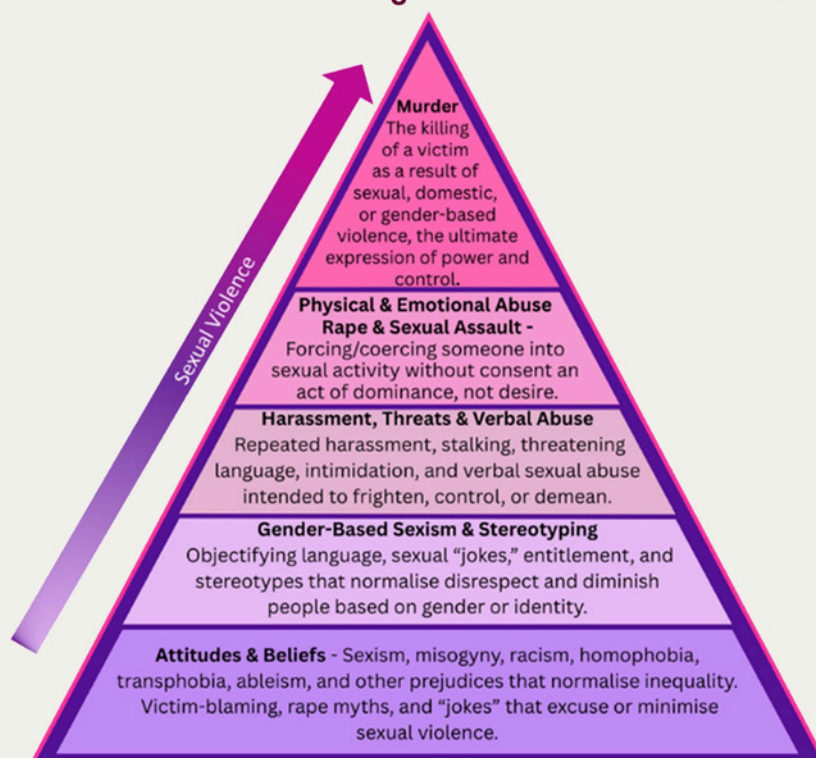
ONLINE – bullying, threats, sharing private images without consent.

COERCIVE CONTROL – patterns of behaviour used to isolate, frighten, or control.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence exists on a broad spectrum—it is not limited to just rape or assault. It includes a range of common, often normalised behaviours.

The Sexual Violence Pyramid is a conceptual model used to illustrate how attitudes, behaviours, and actions related to gender-based violence exist on a spectrum. It shows that the most extreme forms of violence (like rape and murder) are supported by a foundation of more normalised behaviours and beliefs. Preventing sexual violence means addressing every level, not just the top.



Local Statistics

In the Cleveland policing area (covering Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland), in the 12 months up to December 2024 recorded crimes included:

- **12, 917** Domestic Abuse crimes
- **2,641** Sexual Offences
- **908** Rape offences (rate of 1.7 per 1,000 people- this is the third highest rate in England and Wales)

National Statistics

- In 2024, **71,227** rapes were recorded by police.
- **6 in 7** rapes against women are committed by someone they know.
- **739,000** women were raped or sexually assaulted in the year ending March 2025.
- **91%** of people prosecuted for sexual offences are men over the age of 18.

Why It Happens

VAWG happens because of gender inequality — when society gives men more power or control than women.

It's not just about individual actions; it's also about attitudes and systems that allow violence and discrimination to continue.

However please note that sexual violence, abuse and harassment can also affect males and can be perpetrated by any person regardless of gender, race, ethnicity or background or class.

Why Business Awareness Matters

By recognising the signs of abuse, responding safely, and supporting victims discreetly, your business can play a vital role in keeping our communities safe.

When workplaces are informed, they don't just serve customers, they protect them.

By investing in awareness, your business helps to:

- **Create safer, more inclusive environments**
- **Build trust with customers and the community**
- **Strengthen your organisation's social responsibility**

We want to create communities where victims feel supported, staff feel confident to act, and abusers have fewer places to hide.

Keeping People Safe

Being alert to signs of vulnerability and predatory behaviour helps prevent abuse and protect both staff and the public. Every person has a role in creating a safer environment.

1. Be Aware of Vulnerability

- Not everyone who feels unsafe will show it.
- Look for people who appear uncomfortable, isolated, or distressed.

2. Focus on Situations, Not Victims

- Look for vulnerable situations, not “vulnerable people.”

3. Spot Predatory Behaviour

- Check In Safely
- Engage with the person who may need help — “Are you okay?” or “Do you know this person?”
- Get support from colleagues, security, or friends nearby.
- Avoid confrontation; the aim is to interrupt the behaviour safely and offer reassurance.

4. Trust Your Gut — Call It Out and Call It In

If something feels off:

- Call it out – if safe, calmly challenge the behaviour (“That’s not okay”).
- Call it in – report concerns to your manager, security, or police.

Even if you’re unsure, report what you’ve noticed. Information helps build patterns and prevent future harm.

Remember

You don’t need to be certain something is wrong to take action.

- If you think something isn’t right, it probably isn’t.
- Every small action contributes to safety and sends the message: Harassment and abuse are not tolerated here.

How offenders target individuals

Offenders rarely act randomly. They often use calculated strategies to identify, isolate, and control their victims. Understanding these tactics can help staff intervene early and discreetly.

Abuse is never the victim's fault. The responsibility lies entirely with the perpetrator. No behaviour, personality, or circumstance EVER justifies violence.

1. Spotting Vulnerability

Offenders look for individuals who may be:

- Alone or separated from friends
- Distracted, intoxicated, or visibly upset
- New to the area or unfamiliar with their surroundings
- Lacking confidence or appearing withdrawn

2. Grooming and Manipulation

Grooming is a tactic used to build trust and lower defences:

- Offering compliments, gifts, or drinks
- Creating a false sense of safety or friendship
- Slowly testing boundaries (e.g. unwanted touching or personal questions)
- Encouraging secrecy ("Don't tell anyone we talked")
- This can happen in person or online — and often seems harmless at first.

3. Isolation

Offenders may try to separate the victim from others:

- Leading them away from friends or staff
- Insisting on private conversations or secluded areas
- Discouraging outside contact or support
- Isolation makes it harder for victims to ask for help or escape.

4. Control and Coercion

Once isolated, offenders may use:

- Threats or intimidation
- Guilt-tripping or emotional pressure
- Spiking drinks or using substances to impair judgment
- Monitoring movements or phone use

5. Silencing the Victim

To avoid detection, offenders may:

- Blame the victim ("You wanted this")
- Use shame or fear to keep them quiet
- Threaten consequences if they speak out
- Exploit confusion or trauma

How to safely intervene:

The 5Ds — **Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay, and Direct** — are practical ways anyone can safely respond when they witness harassment or abusive behaviour. They provide a tool kit for taking action, supporting those affected, and showing that harassment is never acceptable.

The 5Ds are designed with safety in mind. Four of the methods — Distract, Delegate, Document, and Delay — are indirect interventions, allowing you to make a meaningful impact without confronting the perpetrator directly. Even small actions, like checking in with someone afterwards, creating a distraction, or delegating to someone with authority, can make a real difference in protecting a person and reducing harm.

Why the 5Ds matter:

- They empower individuals to act confidently and responsibly.
- They demonstrate that everyone in the community has a role in keeping each other safe.
- They reinforce that responsibility for harassment always lies with the perpetrator, never the victim.

By learning and using the 5Ds, you can help build a culture of awareness, support, and accountability — creating safer spaces for everyone.

DISTRACTION

The aim of Distraction is to safely interrupt what's happening.

Distraction is a subtle and creative way to intervene. The goal is to derail an incident of harassment or abuse by shifting focus and giving the person being targeted a chance to move away or regain control.

How to use Distraction:

- Engage the person being harassed, not the perpetrator. Start a friendly or unrelated conversation — ask for directions, comment on something nearby, or simply say hello.
- Create a diversion if direct conversation isn't possible — drop something, spill your drink, or make a noise to draw attention and interrupt the situation.
- Avoid mentioning the harassment. Keep the topic completely unrelated so your intervention feels natural.

Distraction works because it shifts the energy and stops the behaviour without confrontation.

It's ideal if you're shy, cautious, or worried the harasser might escalate if challenged directly.

DELEGATE

‘Delegating’ means asking someone else to help when you don’t feel comfortable or safe intervening alone. It’s a practical and responsible way to take action while reducing risk to yourself and others.

Key Principles of Delegation:

1. **Find the Right Person:** Look for someone nearby who is ready and willing to help — this could be a colleague, staff from nearby, security guard, or the police.
2. **Be Clear and Specific:** When asking for help, explain what you’ve noticed and how the person can assist.

If you call the police, try to assess whether the person being targeted is in immediate danger.

- If yes: Call **999** straight away.
- If no: Whenever possible, check with the victim first — some may find police involvement distressing or may not feel ready for it.

DOCUMENT

Document means recording or noting details of harassment to support the victim later or assist authorities. It helps you become a witness, but it must be done safely and responsibly.

How to Document Safely

1. **Assess the Situation First**
 1. Is anyone helping the victim? If not, is it safe to use another “D” first?
 2. Ensure your own safety before recording.
2. **Ways to Document**
 1. Take a video or photo from a safe distance.
 2. Write down details: date, time, location, description of what happened.
 3. If recording video, say the date, time, and location out loud.

Important Rules

- **NEVER** post or share online.
- Always ask the victim what they want done with your notes or recording.
- If the victim doesn’t want to report, you can still share details anonymously with Police or Crimestoppers.
- Note the time for CCTV checks if relevant

DELAY

If it's not safe to act immediately, wait until the situation has passed and then support the person who experienced harm. Delay means helping after the fact, not ignoring what happened.

What a 'Delay' intervention might look like:

- **Check In:** "Are you okay?" "Do you need any help?"
- **Offer Support:** "I saw what happened, and it wasn't okay."
- **Provide Options:** "Would you like me to stay with you or help you report this?"

Many incidents happen quickly, and direct intervention isn't always possible. A simple check-in can reduce trauma and show the person they're not alone, and that what happened to them was not acceptable

DIRECT INTERVENTION

Direct intervention involves responding openly to harassment by naming the inappropriate behaviour and confronting the person causing harm. While it can be effective, it is riskier than other tactics and should only be used when it is safe to do so.

Before Acting, Ask Yourself:

1. Are you and the person being harassed safe?
2. Is escalation unlikely?
3. Does the person want someone to speak up?

Tips:

- Keep it short and clear — avoid arguments or debates.
- Focus on supporting the person harmed, not engaging the harasser.
- If the situation becomes unsafe, switch to another tactic like Delegation, Distraction, or Delay.

Direct intervention can be powerful, but safety for both you and the person being harassed must always come first.

Ask for Angela

Ask for Angela is a discreet way for someone to signal that they feel unsafe — often in a bar, pub, or other social setting — and need help leaving or getting support without alerting the person causing concern.

How it works:

- The individual asks staff for “Angela” when they need assistance.
- Staff are trained to respond discreetly and provide support, such as:
 - Escorting the person to a safe area
 - Offer support such as calling a taxi, friend or security
 - Contacting emergency services if needed

Why it works

- Provides a safe, non-confrontational way for someone to get help.
- Empowers staff to act quickly and safely in response to potential harassment, abuse, or coercion.
- Demonstrates that venues and communities take safety seriously and have practical measures in place.

Key points for staff

- Always respond calmly, discreetly, and without drawing attention.
- Follow your venue or organisation’s safety protocol for getting someone home or contacting authorities.
- Ensure the person feels supported, believed, and safe at every stage.

Supporting a Victim

1. Listen Fully

- Give the person your undivided attention.
- Let them speak at their own pace. Don’t interrupt or push for details.
- Use calm, open body language and maintain a supportive tone.

2. Be Empathetic

- Reassure them: “I’m really sorry this happened to you.”
- Avoid judgment or questioning their actions or choices.
- Validate their feelings: “It’s okay to feel overwhelmed,” or “You’re not alone.”

3. Respect Privacy

- Never share what they've told you without their permission.
- Ask before passing on any information—even to professionals or support services.
- Let them decide who they want to involve.
- Explain confidentiality limits If you're a teacher, supervisor, counsellor, or mandated reporter, you must make this clear early.

'I want to support you, and I also need to tell you that I'm required to report certain information. Let me explain what that means.'

- If you are not in a mandated role, you can simply reassure:

'What you share stays between us unless you want me to help you tell someone else.'

4. Offer Options

- Explain available support services: medical care, counselling, reporting to police.
- Provide information without pressure—respect their right to choose.
- Ask: "Would you like to know what support is available?" or "Would you like help contacting someone?"

5. Check Practical Needs

- Ask if they need help getting home safely.
- Offer to contact a trusted friend, family member, or support service if they wish.
- Ensure they are not left alone if they feel unsafe.

6. Support Reporting (If They Choose To)

- If they choose to report to the police, offer to help them make contact or accompany them.
- Let them lead the process—your role is to support, not direct.
- Be prepared to help them access advocacy or legal support if needed.

Remember

You don't need to have all the answers. Your presence, empathy, and willingness to listen can make a meaningful difference.

Take care of yourself too - supporting someone through a disclosure or witnessing something can be emotionally heavy. It's okay to seek guidance afterward (without violating confidentiality).

Reporting

Call 999 immediately if:

- Someone is in **immediate danger**
- A crime is happening right now
- The offender is still nearby
- You believe serious harm could occur
- Stay on the line and follow the operator's instructions.
- If possible, move to a safe location and keep others away from danger.

Non-Emergency Situations

- If it's **not an emergency**, but you still need police assistance or wish to report an incident:
 - **Call 101** (the non-emergency police number), or
 - Submit an online report via your local police website.
- If the victim wants to report the incident directly, provide them with:
 - The contact details or website for Cleveland Police: www.cleveland.police.uk
 - A quiet, private space to make the call
 - Emotional support or practical help if they wish

Anonymous Reporting

- If the person **does not want to make a police report**, you can still help protect others by sharing information anonymously.
- Reports can be made through Crimestoppers, which is completely confidential and supports police intelligence-gathering.
 - Online: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
 - Tel: 0800 555 111
- Anonymous reports help identify patterns of offending and prevent future harm, even when victims don't feel ready to report.

Further support services can be found in your Useful Contacts Booklet within the packs.



BLEED KIT - HOW TO CONTROL A BLEED

1. Know where your kit is stored

Keep your kit in an accessible place. You don't have long to deal with a catastrophic bleed - so act fast and use materials to hand if needed whilst the kit is located.

TIP: Your bleed kit may be stored in a Bleed Cabinet, located in various locations across Cleveland. Scan the QR code to find your local Bleed Cabinet.



2. Assess the scene and shout for help

Make sure the area is safe before helping.

Call **999** immediately and ask for assistance from a passerby if possible. If you don't have a kit to hand, ask someone to retrieve it for you.



3. Bleed control

Put the **Nitrile Gloves** on to prevent cross contamination. Do **NOT** remove any object stuck in the wound. Apply direct pressure to the wound using **Celox Gauze**, using the **Emergency Shears** to cut if necessary. Following the gauze, you can apply the **Large Trauma Dressing** to cover a packed wound and provide focused pressure.



If the wound is severe and on a **groin, armpit, neck, or torso**, the wound must be packed by stuffing the entire gauze directly and firmly into the wound until it is completely filled. Then apply the dressing to keep pressure applied.

TIP: If you don't have the kit to hand and the bleed is severe, use whatever material you have to make a 'street bandage' until the kit arrives. This could be socks, t-shirt, a tie, a scarf etc.

4. Tourniquet

If heavy bleeding persists and the wound is on a limb (legs & arms **ONLY**) use a **Code Red Tourniquet** found in the kit to stop the flow of blood.

Apply the tourniquet 2-3 inches above the wound (never over a joint), tighten the main strap, then twist the small rod until the bleeding stops.

Lock the rod in place and note the time using your marker pen.



TIP: If you don't have the kit to hand and the bleed is severe, use whatever material you have to make a DIY tourniquet until the kit arrives. Use socks, a scarf or any material thin enough to tie but thick enough not to cut the skin. Use a pen, strong stick, lipgloss, spoon as a rod to twist the tourniquet and hold in place.

5. Chest wounds



If the wound is in the chest, a **Vented Chest Seal** can be applied to prevent the lungs collapsing.

Clean and dry the skin around the wound as best you can then apply the seal directly over the wound. The seal will prevent air from getting in through the wound and allow any trapped air or blood to be exhaled.

6. Monitor the situation

A severe bleed can lead to shock. Use the **Foil Blanket** to help the person regulate their body temperature.

Should the person stop breathing, the **CPR Face Shield** provides a barrier to protect you while performing rescue breaths during CPR.

The **Serial Number Card** allows you to make note of any information necessary for the paramedics, e.g. tourniquet application time.





CHILD EXPLOITATION

What is Child Exploitation?

Child Exploitation is a form of child abuse.

Child Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 into doing things like, stealing, running drugs and sexual activity. The child may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology via the internet and social media.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they are being abused. They may depend on their abuser, believe that they are in a genuine relationship or are too scared to tell anyone what's happening.

It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including Rape.

In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into engaging in sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where:

An individual or group takes advantage of a person under the age of 18 and may coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under that age into any activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may be exploited even if the activity appears consensual (i.e. moving drugs or the proceeds of drugs from one place to another).

Child Exploitation in Cleveland

Child Exploitation is everywhere.

Children and vulnerable adults are being exploited in all communities. Exploitation does not discriminate.

- Around 127,000 children live in the Cleveland police area (which covers Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool).
- In the year to October 2024, 5,650 crimes involved children as victims.

Cleveland has one of the highest sexual crime rates per 1,000 population in England and Wales – about 4.7 per 1,000, above the national average.

Organised criminal groups and street gangs often operate like businesses, using intimidation, threats, and fear to silence victims and communities to maximise profits and continue operating. In contrast, strong and cohesive communities that refuse to tolerate or normalise violence and exploitation can create significant barriers for those committing these offences.

Why should this matter to businesses?

Child exploitation is not fully understood and not properly recorded but we know it is happening. Not only do we need to ensure the safety of young people, but we need to understand how widespread and serious this problem is.

Obligation Under the Licensing Act 2003 to have safeguarding protocols in place. There are legal implications if such protocols are not in place and you do not act in accordance with those protocols.

We have a moral obligation to be alive to it and to act. By raising awareness of child sexual exploitation and ensuring staff know what to look out for and how to respond, businesses can contribute to the safeguarding of children. If those indicators are missed, then a child may become a victim of abuse.

Who is likely to be exploited?

Any child can be a victim of child exploitation, but risk factors include:

- neglect or abuse
- not having a safe and stable home
- poverty
- social isolation or other social difficulties
- connections with people involved in gangs or crime
- disability
- mental health issues
- alcohol or drug problems
- being in care
- being excluded from mainstream education

Signs and Indicators

It's important to be aware of possible signs and indicators of child exploitation.

Although there is no exhaustive list and no two experiences of exploitation are the same, the following are some of the signs and indicators you can look out for.

- displaying aggressive/violent behaviours
- often going missing from home or school and being found away from their normal area
- unexplained money, clothes, designer wear, jewellery, gadgets or mobile phones
- having multiple mobile phones
- getting lots of phone calls or texts
- use and/or possession of drugs and/or alcohol

- possession of hotel key cards/keys
- committing theft/shoplifting
- relationships with older people
- unexplained injuries
- carrying weapons
- abandoning friends and their social circle
- school performance getting worse
- self-harm
- changes in well-being
- significant emotional changes (like becoming angry or sad), or becoming fearful, withdrawn or isolated
- using different language/terminology
- new peer groups and/or relationships with unknown associates

Let's look at an example:

Within a hotel setting, an older man and a young girl check in to a hotel together. They go up to the same room.

Indicators of child exploitation for reception staff could include:

- What type of room has been booked- does it have a double bed.
- Is it a last-minute booking, late on a night.
- Do they have little or no luggage.
- Through their stay, does any other adult request the room number but do not know the name it's booked under.

Indicators for bar staff could include:

- Repeat room service orders of alcohol.
- A young person displaying overtly sexualised behaviours or dressed inappropriately for their age.
- Under-age people attempting to purchase alcohol.

Indicators for Housekeeping staff:

- Signs of alcohol consumption/drug misuse and/or condom wrappers.
- Indications of a 'party' being held.
- Do not disturb signs for long periods.

This example shows that the observations of all staff members within a business are important to safeguarding a young person from harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Often this comes down to trusting your gut when something doesn't feel right. It is not your responsibility to assess whether a child has been exploited, but it is your responsibility to report any concerns.

Remember:

- Your safety is most important.
- Ask the young person – expect denial, swearing, cheek. But don't stop there, trust your instincts.
- Act – contact the police.

If you suspect a person of carrying out child exploitation, call the non-emergency number 101.

If someone is in immediate danger of harm, call 999.

Operation Makesafe

The purpose of Operation Makesafe is to empower businesses and organisations to tackle child exploitation through increased awareness and training.

As a business owner you can ring 101 with any concerns and say, 'Operation Makesafe'. The police can then advise you regarding further steps.

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